(b) if so, the details in this regards?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b) Power is an important infrastructure necessary for steady growth of industry and other economic activities in the country. To meet the increasing demand during 9th Plan, a total capacity addition of 40.245 MW with associated T&D network has been envisaged as per draft Ninth Plan document prepared by Planning Commission.

Besides planning a reliable power network, the power sector also has plans to establish communication network for its own use as well as for leasing out to other Government/private users. Dedicated Digital Optical Fiber and Microwave Network to be owned, operated and maintained by the Power Utilities is in the process of implementation by POWERGRID.

Purchase of Power from Pakistan

1826. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to buy power from Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether any agreement with Pakistan has been finalised in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there are any preconditions attached to the sale and if so, the details thereof;

(e) by when a final decision is likely to be taken in the matter and what amount of foreign exchange India is required to pay to Pakistan on this account,

(f) whether the import of power from Pakistan would enable India to meet our domestic demand substantially; and

(g) if not, the steps contemplated to boost power generation within the country?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (f) The matter regarding purchase of power from Pakistan came up for discussions at the bilateral talks with Pakistan on Economic and Commercial Cooperation in New Delhi on 10.11.1998 when the Pakistani delegation expressed its willingness to receive a delegation from India for discussion on the issue of Power export by Pakistan. The Government of India accepted the invitation and a seven member technical team led by Special Secretary in the Ministry of Power visited Pakistan and held technical level discussions with Pakistan delegation on November, 25-26, 1998. It was agreed during the discussions that the next round of discussions would be held in New Delhi on mutually convenient dates for consideration and in-principle agreement in the power export possibility identified for the short term and subject to the conclusion of such agreement, commercial discussions would follow. No final decision has yet been taken.

(g) Necessary steps have also been taken to augme nt the generation capacity within the country to bridge the gap between demand and supply.

Conversion of State Highways into National Highways in Andhra Pradesh

1827. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether some State Highways in Andhra Pradesh have been converted into National Highways during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details of these Highways as on 31st March, 1998 district-wise;

(c) whether such converted National Highways have been widened with bye-roads for smooth passege of road traffic;

(d) if so, the details in this regard, district-wise, and year-wise amount spent on each and by when this work would be completed;